

**From:** mbutcher  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I am very disappointed in the proposed settlement with Microsoft over their monopolistic behavior. It is safe to say that in the technology sector, Microsoft is viewed as nothing short of a tyrant doing it's best to eliminate all competition large and small through unethical (and illegal) practices. Leveraging what amounts to a stranglehold on the desktop operating systems market, Microsoft has sought to force usage (and hence licensing) of many of their other products, including Internet Explorer, updated versions of the OS (XP, Windows 2000), Office, and Windows Media Player, to name a few.

The bottom line, for me, is that Microsoft is an anticompetitive monopoly. They have proven time and again that they will not change their practices of their own volition. They have proven time and again that they will do what they want without regard to the consumer (consider their new software, Passport, which makes my personal information, including credit card numbers, available to Microsoft at any time). Time and again they have proven to choose profits over concerns of legality or ethics.

The "slap on the wrist" settlement proposed by the DOJ does little to solve these problems I've highlighted. I believe the proposal will allow Microsoft to continue in their current practices unchecked. Toothless and ambiguous requirements (consider section III.A or II.F) are so easily sidestepped that it amazes me that anyone even bothered to put pen to paper. Section H bears the most remarkably ludicrous caveat that it renders the whole section moot. Microsoft Middleware is not allowed to be "un-deinstallable" unless competitors' products FAIL TO IMPLEMENT a reasonable technical requirement? So, as long as IE contains a component that is required by the IS or a Microsoft server, IE may remain "un-deinstallable." Let me tell you what the first thing is that Microsoft will add to IE 6.1.... Besides, having patent, trade secret, and copyright protection over those possible features is enough to ensure that no one else will be able to implement those features.

The settlement doesn't even seek to discuss the other monopolistic practices of Microsoft, such as including near-mandatory submission of personal data to Microsoft's corporate servers for use by Microsoft. This information includes credit card and other sensitive data, and Microsoft's "secure" servers have already been hacked once by external computer crackers.

I am disappointed in the decisions of the DOJ on this matter. As a republican, I usually shy away from radical government intervention in corporate practices, but MS is an exception. I would have preferred to see serious consequences to serious crimes.

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